of freesale sugar reflected a moderate downward trend. This in considered necessary to enable the factories to pay remunerative prices to cane growers and to keep up the production of sugar.

**Agriculture Research and Development**

*56. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH BHATI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether expenditure on Agriculture Research and Development is very low in India in comparison to the other developing countries;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any special steps are being taken by the Government to promote; the Agriculture Research and Development; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b) The current expenditure on agricultural research in India is not very low. It is about 0.3 percent of agricultural gross domestic product (GDP) as compared to around 0.3 to 0.75 percent in the developing countries. However, a norm of 1% of agricultural GDP is suggested to be the minimum research investment target. Higher allocations to meet the target have not been possible on account of resource constraints.

(c) and (d) The Government has taken steps to increase the Plan outlay for R&D from Rs. 85 crore in IV Five Year Plan to Rs. 1300 crore in VIII Five Year Plan. Further, keeping in view the recommendations of the Standing Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture as well as the realistic resource requirements for agricultural R&D, the IX Plan Working Group of DARE/ICAR has recommended to the Planning Commission that the investment in agricultural research should be raised to at least 1 per cent of Agricultural GDP during the IX Five Year Plan.

*[English]*

**Investigation by NHRC**

*57. SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY :
SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Human Rights Commission has investigated the charges of starvation deaths in Orissa;

(b) if so, the findings thereof; and

(c) the action taken thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b) A Team of officers of the National Human Rights Commission had undertaken a preliminary visit to Orissa on 12-14 December, 1996 for collection of facts about the reported starvation deaths. Government have not received any report from the commission in this regard so far.

(c) Does not arise.

*[Translation]*

**Atrocities on Girls**

*58. SHRIMATI KETAKI DEVI SINGH :
KUMARI UMABHARATI :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that NCC girls of Jammu and Kashmir returning to their homes after performing in the Republic Day Celebrations in Delhi, were molested in the running train near Meerut on January 30, 1997;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted into the incident;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof and the number of persons arrested in this connection; and

(e) the action taken against them ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA) : (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**Statement**

(a) to (e) According to information received from the Government of Uttar Pradesh, on 30.1.1997, a group of 25 artistes comprising of 5 men and 20 women from Jammu & Kashmir was going back by Shalimar Express after participating in the Republic Day celebrations. There was an altercation over seating in the compartment between some women artistes and daily passengers who reportedly misbehaved with the artistes. 2 BSF jawans and 1 GRP jawan also sustained injuries during the incident while trying to intervene.

2. A case under sections 147/323/332/353/354/308 IPC and 145 Railways Act has been registered in GRP Meerut. Twelve accused persons have so far been arrested. Three other accused persons have surrendered. Action against two persons named in the FIR was taken under the National Security Act and they have been served externment notices by the District Magistrate.

**Naxalite Activities**

*59. SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH :
DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of persons killed in various States due to naxalite attacks during the last six months, State-wise;

(b) whether such incidents have been increasing constantly in naxalite affected States;

(c) If so, the steps taken by the Government to check the same;

(d) whether the Naxalite affected States have urged the Union Government to treat the naxalite menace at the national level;

(e) if so, the response of the Government in this regard;

(f) whether the Government have formulated any action plan for instant implementation by the affected States;

(g) whether the State Governments have also requested the union Government to provide more Central para-military forces to tackle this menace; and

(h) if so, the details of assistance sought by the affected States and the actual provided to them during the last two years ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS : (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA) : (a) As per the available reports, during the period July-December, 1996, naxalites were responsible for the following deaths :

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Andhra Pradesh | : | 105 |
| Bihar | : | 156 |
| Madhya Pradesh | : | 15 |
| Maharashtra | : | 9 |

(b) Through the number of incidents reported from the various State showed a decline in July-December, 1996 when compared to the previous six-monthly period, the number of deaths in these incidents have registered slight increase.

(c) "Public Order" and "Police" being State subjects, it is for the concerned State Governments to devise various methods and take concrete steps in this regard At the Central level, action is taken to facilitate coordination of the anti-naxalite operations of different States and to improve flow of information useful for control of naxalite activities among the States. Further help is being provided to the State Governments in terms of financial assistance for modernisation of police, supply of improved weapons, deployment of para-military forces etc. In certain special circumstances, financial assistance has also been given to some of the affected States over and above the on-going allocations for modernisattion of police and supply of weapons.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir, Central Government has taken adequate measures to help the States to fight the menace These include holding of coordination meetings with the States concerned as well as with the various intelligence and investigating agencies of the Central Government to exchange information, share intelligence, plan strategy and take coordinated action. In certain special circumstances, financial assistance has also been given to some of the affected States over and above the on-going allocations for modernisation of police and supply weapons. Training of police personnel in Anti-Extremist Operations has also been arranged.

(f) Central Government, in consultation with the concerned States has drawn an Action Plan in this regard which includes :

(i) ensuring security of police stations, particularly those located in Naxalite affected areas;

(ii) to have a common communication system;

(iii) set up a Control Room in each State;

(iv) Joint Patrolling; and

(v) Launching of Area Domination Programme among the States; and

(vi) Ministry of Home Affairs have also arranged for training of police personnel in anti-extremist operations.

(vii) Strengthening of intelligence network in affected areas in concerned States;

(g) and (h) Central para-military forces are made available to the States to assist them in maintaining public order. The level of deployment depend upon the requirement of each State and the overall availability of the Force. As such to indicate the details of force or level of deployment will not be in public interest.

**Arrears due of Sugarcane Growers**

*60. SHRI K. PARASURAMAN :
SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV :

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) the present status of the arrears to be paid to the sugarcane growers, State-wise;

(b) the details of payments outstanding for more than the last two years and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the farmers are currently being paid their dues or the arrears have started accumulating again;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(e) the action taken by the Government to ensure that the work of sugarcane crushing goes without hindrance and farmers are paid their dues ?